

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Industrial Plating

North Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Industrial Plating Achieves Capacity Gains

Client Profile:

Industrial Plating Corporation (IPC), located in Wahpeton, North Dakota, was founded in 1969. In 1996 the company established their threading division to provide formed, threaded, welded metal parts that are then plated by the plating division. This addition provides a complete component with a single purchase order. The company has experienced rapid growth over the past several years and continues to expand its geographical presence. Currently, IPC's 55 employees provide zinc plated steel component parts to several world-class construction and agricultural manufacturers.

Situation:

Rapid sales growth within IPC's plating division created capacity and space constraints. In the summer of 2004, company President Howard Jenson contacted The Dakota Manufacturing Extension Partnership (TD MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to discuss his growth-related concerns and to create a plan to address these issues.

Solution:

In November of 2004 TD MEP spent three days assisting IPC employees value stream map processes. At the conclusion, an employee balance chart was decided on that would balance work through a given line and help to insure on-time delivery to customers.

Results:

- * Implemented process improvements.
- * Maintained capacity by using one-third less area.
- * Delayed major capital improvements.

Testimonial:

"Due to the work TD MEP performed for us we were able to delay major capital improvements. Based upon our experience with this project, we engaged the TD MEP to implement a cost reduction program in our threading division in late 2005. While not all of the recommendations of TD MEP have been fully implemented at this time, the results have been positive."

Tom Bruner, General Manager